231 463 animals entrusted to them and the skill and devotion needed if the animals are to get the best pasture and to multiply rapidly. Skill is required especially in the lambing season. A shepherd is treated like a member of the family. At each meal one of the daughters-in-law presents him with his bowl of food, with both hands, with the same respect that is shown to the head of the family, and the shepherd's food is as good as that of the head of the family.

231 648 When there is not enough rain and the pasture is poor, the Monguors will go with a present to the chief of one of the nomad tribes of Tibetans or Mongols, asking permission to graze their stock on his land during the summer. The nomads are always very generous and helpful at such times.

231 The Monguors will never sell an animal, or allow an animal already sold to leave their home, on the first or fifteenth of the moon for fear that prosperity and luck might leave the family. Other beliefs in connection with cattle breeding will be discussed in my later work on the religious life of the Monguors.

231 251 An old Monguor of some sixty years once told me that during his lifetime he remembered four different occasions on which the cattle herds had been devastated by epizootics. When such a disaster happens, the flesh of the animals who have died of sickness is cut in long, thin strips which are dried in the sun and for the following year the Monguors have tough beef to chew at every meal.

HUNTING AND FISHING

224 136 The Monguors hunt with the gun and with traps and poison, but because the region has become too thickly populated to support a great deal of game there is no hunting on a large scale. The animals hunted are foxes, wolves, musk-deer, hares, and pheasants, while boys like to shoot marmots with matchlock guns. Foxes and wolves are killed sometimes with the gun, but more usually with strychnine bought from the Chinese. First the tracks of the animal to be poisoned are studied in order to determine its habits. Then for several days meat, taken from hares and birds that have been killed by the hunter, is laid out in order to accustom the animal to this kind of feeding. The poison is then set out. Sometimes the strychnine is put inside a ball of meat, but more usually it is put in the hollow of a long, thin bone, the ends of which are sealed with wax. The fox or wolf dies near the place where it has cracked and swallowed such a bone, while strychnine placed in a ball of meat is slower to act and the animal may travel so far that it is difficult to track. Foxes are also taken with iron traps bought from Chinese smiths. The animal to be trapped is first watched carefully for a number of days in order to learn its habits. Then roasted flour is set out for it to feed on, so that it becomes unwary, and finally the trap is baited and set.

The most valuable game is the musk-deer, which is

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1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

224 136 hunted in the forests of Hsimi. This animal has the habit of making and following a small beaten trail along which it goes always to the same place to drop its dung—which is done regularly at the same time of day—and to rub itself against small trees. When such a trail has been found the hunter studies it carefully to determine the best place to attach a running noose to a small tree, which is then bent over and attached to a stake in such a manner that when the deer, going along the trail, puts its head in the noose, the stake is knocked aside, the tree springs up, and the more the deer struggles the more quickly it is strangled. The hunter lies hidden watching the trap and the moment the deer is caught he rushes out with a knife to cut out the precious musk pod, which is on the surface of the stomach, near the genitalia. It is believed that the pod must be cut out immediately because otherwise the blood inside the pod will be absorbed into the body of the animal, and the "virtue" of the musk will be lost.

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The musk-deer hunters admit that adulteration of this valuable commodity begins the moment that the animal is caught. Musk pods are sold by weight, and therefore as soon as he has cut out the pod the hunter stuffs it with blood and shredded liver from the deer in order to increase the weight. It is seldom that one can buy unadulterated musk in the shops of the Chinese dealers, because in addition to what is done by the hunters themselves to increase the weight, no one knows what the dealers add.

226 648 Although the lamas and most (though not all) Mongols abhor the eating of fish, considering that taking the lives of the fish is a sin that will affect the sinner's next incarnation, the Monguors do engage in considerable fishing in Kukunor.[7] As soon as the lake has frozen in winter, small expeditions go from the Monguor country to the lake. Such an expedition lasts for about two months, and the Monguors are back by New Year's Eve of the lunar calendar, which comes usually toward the end of February or the beginning of March. The Monguors go first to see the chief of the Mongol or

[7] Kukunor, the "Azure Lake," is 230 miles in circumference, at an altitude of 10,900 feet above sea level. (W. W. Rockhill, *The land of the lamas*, 120, New York, Century, 1891.) The water is salty. Two rivers run into the lake, the bottom of which is covered with sand and small stones. One big island rises out of the water and is inhabited by a few lamas, who only in wintertime, when the lake is frozen, can come ashore, since no boats are used on the lake. At that time the Tibetans drive horses and sheep to the island in order that they may graze and breed; colts and lambs bred on the island are assumed to be a blessing for the herds. The famous *Ch'ien-li-ma* (horses which are reputed to run 1,000 *li* or approximately 300 miles in one day) celebrated as long ago as the Han dynasty, are said to be bred on the island, whose grass is reputed wonderfully nutritive for animals. There are three kinds of fishes in the lake, where fish are plentiful: *schizopygopsis przewalskii*, *schizopygopsis leptocephalus*, and *schizopygopsis gracilis*. They weigh from three to five and seven pounds (Przewalskii, *Reisen in der Mongolei, in das Gebiet der Tanguten und den Wüstan Nordtibets*, 140, Jena, 1873).

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